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IMMEDIATE

FRP:

OUTGOING

STAFF

OUTGOING MESSAGE

b(3)

PAGE 001
TOT: 040408Z JAN 89

b(3)

BRIEF 040407Z

TO: IMMEDIATE ROUTINE MEA BRIEF.

b(3)

b(3)

OUTGOING MESSAGE

b(3)

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST BRIEF FOR 4 JANUARY 1989.

FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

CONTENTS

1. USSR-AFGHANISTAN: VORONTSOV'S DIPLOMATIC SCRAMBLING

2. CHINA: STUDENT PROTESTS SPREAD

4. IN BRIEF

b(1) b(3)

1. USSR-AFGHANISTAN: VORONTSOV'S DIPLOMATIC SCRAMBLING

AS SOVIET TROOPS APPEAR TO BE BEGINNING THE FINAL PHASE OF THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN, FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VORONTSOV YESTERDAY COMPLETED HIS TALKS IN TEHRAN WITH IRANIAN OFFICIALS AND AFGHAN RESISTANCE GROUPS BASED IN IRAN; HE IS HEADED FOR ISLAMABAD TO MEET WITH PAKISTANI LEADERS AND, PROBABLY, THE RESISTANCE ALLIANCE IN PESHAWAR.

b(3)

IN TEHRAN, VORONTSOV TOLD REPORTERS THAT AN AFGHAN POLITICAL SOLUTION MUST INCLUDE ALL GROUPS AND CALLED ON THE RESISTANCE TO OBSERVE THE CEASE-FIRE KABUL HAS PROCLAIMED. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT SOME OF THE PAKISTAN-BASED RESISTANCE PARTIES WOULD ACCEPT THE

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Approved for Release
Date JUN 1999

3 8 2 9

355

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PAGE 002
TOT: 040408Z JAN 89

PARTICIPATION OF FORMER AFGHAN KING ZAHIR, WITH WHOM VORONTSOV
CONFERRED IN ROME LATE LAST MONTH.

THE SOVIETS HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT VORONTSOV WILL ARRIVE IN
ISLAMABAD TODAY FOR TALKS WITH PAKISTANI OFFICIALS; HE IS TO MEET
WITH PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO ON SATURDAY. SOVIET MEDIA HAVE MADE NO
MENTION OF A SECOND ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PESHAWAR-BASED
RESISTANCE ALLIANCE--
BUT REPORTS OUT OF PAKISTAN SAY SUCH TALKS ARE EXPECTED ON FRIDAY.

VORONTSOV'S CURRENT TALKS ARE PART OF A DESPERATE
ATTEMPT TO COVER THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL BY APPEARING TO GET MOVEMENT
UNDER WAY TOWARD A NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT BEFORE 15 FEBRUARY. HIS
REMARKS IN TEHRAN AND THE SOVIET FAILURE SO FAR TO CONFIRM THAT A
MEETING WITH THE PESHAWAR ALLIANCE IS PLANNED INDICATE THAT MOSCOW
IS TRYING TO HELP THE KABUL REGIME'S PROSPECTS FOR A CONTINUING ROLE
BY PROMOTING ANXIETIES AND EXPLOITING DISAGREEMENTS AMONG THE
RESISTANCE AND ITS PATRONS. THE RESUMPTION OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL,
HOWEVER, REDUCES WHAT LITTLE LEVERAGE MOSCOW HAS IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS
WITH THE RESISTANCE, WHICH WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY CONTINUE TO REJECT
ANY ROLE FOR THE CURRENT REGIME IN A NEW GOVERNMENT.

VORONTSOV WILL PROBABLY USE HIS SESSION WITH BHUTTO--HER FIRST
AS PRIME MINISTER WITH A SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIAL--TO LINK THE
PROSPECT OF CLOSER SOVIET-PAKISTANI TIES TO RESTRAINT BY ISLAMABAD
ON AFGHANISTAN. THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, HAVE ALREADY ACKNOWLEDGED IN
THEIR MEDIA THAT BHUTTO IS NOT YET STRONG ENOUGH TO CHANGE
PAKISTAN'S AFGHAN POLICY. SHE WILL LINK IMPROVED RELATIONS TO
COMPLETION OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL AND WILL PROBE MOSCOW'S
WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

2. CHINA: STUDENT PROTESTS SPREAD

ANTI-AFRICAN STUDENT PROTESTS MAY CONTINUE FOR THE NEXT COUPLE
OF WEEKS, AND AFRICAN STUDENTS MAY HOLD A COUNTERDEMONSTRATION IN
BEIJING TODAY. MEANWHILE, ABOUT 50 AFRICAN STUDENTS REMAIN HOLED UP
IN THE NANJING GUESTHOUSE WHERE POLICE BEAT SEVERAL DURING A RAID ON
SATURDAY. THE DEMONSTRATIONS YESTERDAY SPREAD TO BEIJING, THE FOURTH
CHINESE CITY TO EXPERIENCE RACIALLY MOTIVATED INCIDENTS IN THE PAST
10 DAYS.

ALTHOUGH TRIGGERED BY ANTI-AFRICAN SENTIMENT, THE
DEMONSTRATIONS ALSO REFLECT GROWING FRUSTRATION AMONG CHINESE
STUDENTS OVER DETERIORATING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS--
ESPECIALLY POOR LIVING CONDITIONS ON CAMPUS, BLEAK JOB PROSPECTS,
LOW PAY, AND THE LACK OF POLITICAL REFORM. CHINESE LEADERS PROBABLY
FEAR THE PROTESTS MIGHT TAKE ON LARGER POLITICAL OVERTONES AND
SPREAD TO OTHER SECTORS OF SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY WORKER ELEMENTS.
BEIJING THEREFORE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE CAMPUSES CLOSELY.
AFRICAN STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE THE BRUNT OF ANY
GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN BECAUSE BEIJING DOES NOT WANT TO STIR UP
ANTIGOVERNMENT FEELINGS AMONG CHINESE STUDENTS. BEIJING PROBABLY
ALSO HOPES THAT THE SEMESTER BREAK AT THE END OF THIS MONTH WILL
HELP DEESCALATE TENSIONS.

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b(3)

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b(3)

b(3)

b(3)

b(3)

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OUTGOING MESSAGE

OUTGOING MESSAGE

OUTGOING MESSAGE

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 003
TOT: 040408Z JAN 89

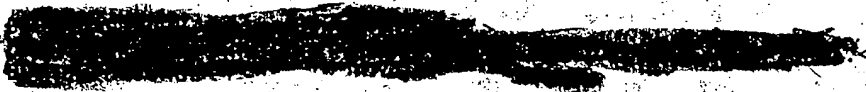


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4. IN BRIEF
MIDDLE EAST



X--SKIRMISHING BETWEEN RIVAL LEBANESE SHIA MILITIAS, AMAL AND
HIZBALLAH, SPREAD TO SOUTHERN LEBANON YESTERDAY FROM BEIRUT'S
SOUTHERN SUBURBS . . . SYRIANS UNABLE TO CONTAIN, IRANIANS TRYING TO
MEDIATE.



b(1) b(3)

b(3)

b(3)

OUTGOING
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OUTGOING
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3 8 3 1